**Epuraea guttata* 01. and *E. pusilla* Ill., both singly; **Cryptarcha strigata* F., 3, and 3 more on 17.v.85; *Carpophilus sexpustulatus* F., **Thamiaraea cinnamomea* Grav. and **T. hospita* Mark., all singly; *Atheta taxiceroides* Munst., plentiful on 11.xi but hard to secure, running in warm sunshine in and out of crevices and fissures of bark.

I had never before encountered any of these in the S. E. London area (not even the widespread *E. pusilla*); but what is especially noteworthy is the occurrence of the four starred species traditionally associated almost exclusively with *Cossus*-infected sap, though I could find no evidence of the latter's presence. Compare my remarks in 1985, *Ent. Rec.* **97**: 32-3, regarding an undoubted *Cossus* oak at Blackheath (which yielded none of the above!). I have now to retract the suggestion there put forward that because of the extreme rarity of *Cossus* in this area to-day, its specifically associated beetles probably no longer exist there. On the contrary, it now seems that in the absence of *Cossus* they can make do quite well with uninfected sap (and may increasingly be obliged to do so).

A. taxiceroides was a notable find, since not only is the species new for the London district but the above habitat also is unrecorded for it; previous captures (not yet numerous) connect it with nests and especially squirrels' dreys. Experience points to it as an autumn species, and indeed it was found the following spring to be replaced on the oak by the closely-allied *A. nigricornis* Thoms.

Had this profitable tree only been discovered earlier in the season (assuming the sap was then flowing) other notable insects might well have been obtained – including, possibly, the remaining three members of our little band of recognized *'Cossus'* beetles. That is, apart from *Tachinus bipustulatus* F. which, formerly not rare, seems unaccountalby to have died out (or very nearly so). The absence of *Soronia grisea* L. at the Oxleas oak, contrasting with its abundance at the Blackheath one, was surprising.

It remains only to say that, as foreseen, this noble tree quickly healed its wounds by fresh growth, all sap flows having dried up by the following June; hardly a trace now remains of its previous scarring. I am grateful to my friend Alex Williams who on his first visit to the wood happened to light upon the tree and, having collected from it three of the above species, promptly informed me of the fact. – A. A. ALLEN.

A NOTE ON THE APPARENT LOWERING OF MORAL STANDARDS IN THE LEPIDOPTERA – It is a sad sign of our times that the National newspapers are all too often packed with the lurid details of declining moral standards and of horrific sexual offences committed by our fellow *Homo sapiens;* perhaps it is also a sign of the times that the entomological literature appears of late to be

heading in a similar direction. I published a short note on aberrant sexual behaviour in butterflies observed on Mount Kenya in 1983 (Tennent: 1984) and recently returned home from a spell abroad to find similar behaviour recorded in no less than three of the latest issues of different entomological journals (Hobbs: 1986, Knill-Jones: 1986, Winter: 1985). Unfortunately, I'm afraid there's more:—

I was in Morocco recently and spent some time in and around Oukaimeden in the High Atlas Mountains south of Marrakech. On the 11th of June 1986 I was lucky enough to stumble upon a thriving colony of *Cyaniris semiargus maroccana* just emerging in some long grass at ca. 2600 metres. Having taken some photographs I observed a cluster of four males flying closely around what I assumed to be a freshly emerged female sitting with her wings closed low down in the grass. Wanting photographs of a pair *in cop* I waited to see which, if any, of the males would be the successful suitor but soon realised that the object of their attention and affections was also a male. The attendant males vied with one another and each was curving his abdomen in a frantic attempt to make contact with the abdomen of the emerging male. The latter did not respond but was unable to escape as it's wings were still soft. It laboriously made it's way up the grass stem and was much buffeted by the others en route.

The situation became even more strange when a fresh female came to rest with her wings open on a grass stem no more than a foot away. One of the four males approached her, she immediately raised her abdomen and vibrated her wings but after a very cursory examination the male returned to the pack and continued forcing his attentions on his fellow. During the next hour or so I saw a further three groups of males, one of which contained eight individuals, behaving in a similar manner towards fresh males whose wings were not yet dry.

Males on the emergence ground outnumbered females by about five to one although the latter sex were still common. The females habitually rested with their wings open and were often visited fleetingly by passing males, however, I did not see any female being 'pestered'. The time was about midday.

To set the reader's mind at rest I should also record that I subsequently observed a number of 'normal' pairs *in cop*; at least some individuals had the furtherance of the colony at heart and the appearance of the colony next year is thereby assured.

Whatever next? !

References:

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Tennent W. J. 1984. Fresh mountain air . . . . . ? *Ent. Rec.* **96** : 131-132;

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LOPHOSIA FASCIATA MG. (DIPT.: TACHINIDAE) IN THE LONDON SUBURBS, AND AN APPARENTLY NEW HOST RECORD. — A specimen of this elegant and distinctive Tachinid emerged (2.vii.86) from a puparium voided on or about 18th June by a hawthorn shieldbug, *Acanthosoma haemorrhoidale* L., taken on the 13th at Oxleas Wood SSSI, Shooters Hill. (As appears usual in such cases, the bug showed no sign of being troubled by the parasite and remained alive several more days.) Van Emden (1954, *Handb.Ident.Brit.Ins.* **10**(4a): 10) does not include *Acanthosoma* at all in his list of host-list of British Tachinidae, stating under *L. fasciata* (p. 21) only that it has been bred from the shieldbug *Aelia*. The latter has never occurred to me in this district, nor do I think it was present in the vicinity when my friend Dudley Collins found an example of the fly inside a window of his house at Carshalton Beeches (Surrey) several years ago. A possible host there might have been either of two other Pentatomoids, *Elasmucha grisea* and *Cyphostethus tristriatus*, both having occurred close by. *Lophosia fasciata* is always a scarce insect, which has probably been more often taken in the New Forest area than elsewhere; there, at least, it has been said to favour the flowers of parsnip. The present record is likely to be the first for Greater London, and perhaps also for West Kent. — A. A. ALLEN.

THE BRIMSTONE, GONEPTERYX RHAMNI L. EGG-LAYING ON DOCK. — During field work for the butterfly atlas project in Hertfordshire, at Westmill near Buntingford, on 12th June 1986, observations were made on a female brimstone which was exploring rough vegetation at the edge of a horse paddock near the River Rib. The butterfly eventually circled a small patch of curled dock (*Rumex crispus* L.) and appeared to be inspecting for egg-laying sites on both stems and leaves. This activity was watched for some five minutes, at which point an examination was made of the plants being used and newly-laid brimstone eggs were found. It was estimated that at least 10 eggs were laid in this time, almost entirely on one clump of the plants. These were in semi-shade but not near any other rough vegetation. In particular, no bushes of buckthorn *Rhamnus catharticus* L., the only one of the